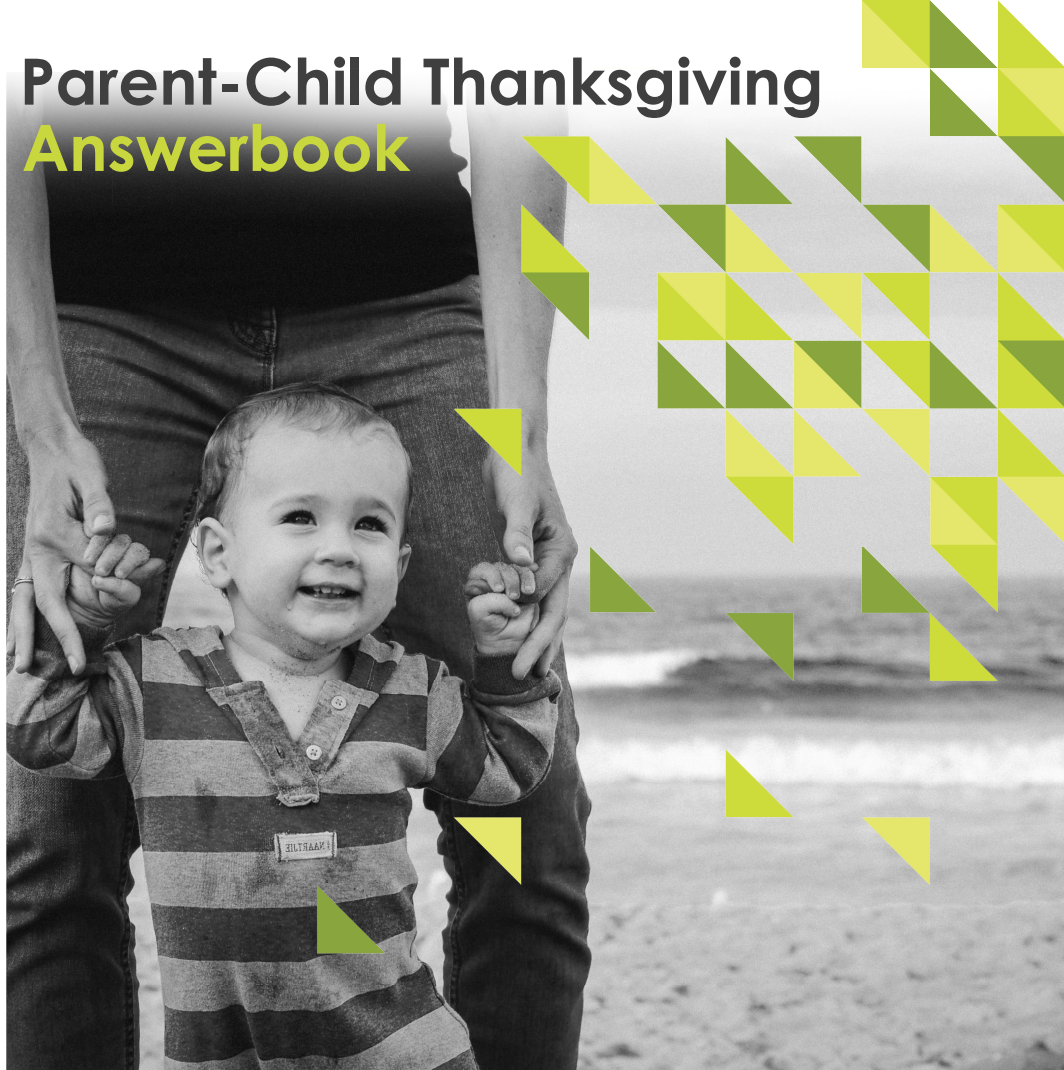


Parent-Child Thanksgiving Answerbook




Newcraigs
Kirkcaldy



Parent/Child Dedication

Here at Newcraigs we believe children are a gift from God, and we are very excited that you are investigating Parent/Child dedication.

Parent/Child dedication is a public commitment you make before God, your church, and your family. The dedication service provides you, the parent(s), an opportunity to express publically your desire to lead and spiritually nurture your child in cooperation with the Holy Spirit, so your child will develop a desire to love God and love others.

Where do we find Child dedication in the Bible?

The scriptural root of a child dedication is found in 1 Samuel 1:27–28 where a godly woman named Hannah prayed year after year for God to give her a child. He answered her prayer and she gave birth to a son, whom she named Samuel. When Samuel was born, Hannah prayed these words:

"For this boy I prayed, and the Lord has given me my petition which I asked of Him. So I have also dedicated him to the Lord; as long as he lives he is dedicated to the Lord."

In Luke chapter 2 of the New Testament, following the birth of Jesus, Mary and Joseph took the infant Jesus to the temple and dedicated Him.

In both Scripture passages, the parents entrusted their child completely to God.

The writings of Moses found in Deuteronomy 6:5–9 describe God's plan for how a parent should raise up a child:

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates."

One key step in marking your desire to nurture your child in the ways of God is to dedicate him or her to God publically, through a child dedication service.

Do I need to be a member of the church?

You do not need to be a member of Newcraigs to have your child dedicated. We do encourage parents to make sure they are calling Newcraigs their home church. Why? In dedicating your child to God, you are stating that you are willing to partner with God *and the church* to raise your child in cooperation with God's intentions. To partner with any church, a parent would be wise to decide if he or she agrees with its beliefs and vision, so they can be all-in in their partnership with the church.

When you choose to become a member at Newcraigs, you are stating that you agree with the Church's beliefs and values, and that you want Newcraigs to be your home church.

(For more information on membership please see our Membership Matters leaflet.)

To have your child dedicated at Newcraigs:

- We ask parents to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ
- We ask parents to make sure that they line up with the Statement of Faith held by the church.
- We ask parents to be regular attenders of Newcraig's Sunday Services
- We ask parents who are living together and who are not married to take steps to acknowledge and surrender to God's plan for their relationship before participating in a child dedication service.

Do you baptise children at Newcraigs?

Scripture provides evidence that Baptism follows an individual's decision to trust Christ alone for salvation (Acts 2:41, 8:12, and 10:47–48). And the New Testament records the baptisms of adult believers only.

In the Bible, we find parents bringing their children to Jesus. He held them, prayed for them, and told us to welcome them. But He did not baptise them and He did not tell anyone else to baptise them. Newcraigs believes Baptism is for those who have made a personal decision to trust Christ alone for their salvation, once they have the maturity and ability to understand what that means.

Dedication is not a sacrament; nor does it impart grace or salvation to a child. Salvation comes only through faith in Jesus Christ as each person recognises their sinfulness and receives forgiveness and eternal life through Christ and His work on the cross.

Rather than baptising infants or children, Newcraigs encourages Christian parents to dedicate their children. This is a service in which parents formally call upon God's blessing for their child and publicly commit to raise him or her in accordance with Scripture.

Can parents assign 'Godparents'?

Although the term "Godparent" is not used at Newcraigs we do welcome parents to invite friends and family members committed to supporting them to stand with them during the dedication. The presence of these significant adults symbolizes their commitment to play a supportive role in the child's spiritual development.

Please feel free to talk to the Pastor or any of the Leadership about any further questions you may have concerning Parent/Child Dedication.